VRS COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 2013 – 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

WOODBURY VRS OFFICE / HUDSON CONFERENCE ROOM

SESSION NOTES:

Committee Objective

The purpose of the VRS Community Rehabilitation Program Advisory Committee is to provide strategic advice and consultation to DEED/VRS on topics and issues affecting the mutual provision of DEED/VRS and CRP/LUV services to Minnesotans with disabilities. Our efforts to understand issues and to work collaboratively will build and nurture the capacity of Minnesota's rehabilitation community to advance the employment, independent living and community integration of Minnesotans with disabilities.

Specifically, the VRS Community Rehabilitation Program Advisory Committee will:

- Represent the perspectives and interests of CRP/LUVs in advancing rehabilitation and employment issues while fostering dialogue and engagement on critical issues throughout the greater rehabilitation community
- Provide strategic level advice and consultation to DEED/VRS on matters affecting CRP/LUVs
- Identify key topics and issues affecting CRP/LUVs and DEED/VRS
- Consider input from subject matter experts in issues affecting economic development, state demographics / population trends, and promising practices
- Engage in active reflection, spirited discussion and strategic dialogue on critical topics affecting CRP/LUVs and DEED/VRS services to persons with disabilities in Minnesota
- Provide a forum for the review and discussion of critical VRS and CRP service delivery topics including, but not limited to: current service delivery practices; new and emerging service needs; identifying best practices; and the consideration of statewide service needs and resources
- Promote innovative service practices to accelerate the adoption of best practices at a systems level that fosters equitable access to quality services on a statewide basis

2013 Community Partner Members (listed alphabetically): Becky Bazzare, Laura Bealey, Gil Bessard, Steve Brink, Heather Deutschlaender, Mike Harper, Dan Meyers, Julie Peterschick, Rachel Praught, Lori Sterner, Sara Sundeen, and Leslie Swartling

VRS Members: Becky Johnson, Peg Killen, Roland Root, Dee Torgerson, and Jeri Werner

Sponsor: Kim Peck, VRS Director

Co-leaders: Chris McVey, David Sherwood-Gabrielson and Jan Thompson

Facilitator: Holly Johnson

2013 Schedule: Jan 25, Feb 22, Apr 26, Jun 28, Sep 27, Oct 25, and Dec 6.

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January 25, 2013 Session Objectives:

- ★ Welcome and introduction of new advisory committee members
- * Review of 2012 VRS CRP Advisory Committee charter for relevant 2013 updates
- * Provide a conduit for sharing relevant, important and timely updates and information for the benefit of vocational rehabilitation community and consumers
- * Engage committee members in an introduction to the DISCOVERY process as a model for serving consumers with the most significant disabilities
- ★ Facilitate advisory dialogue on strategic topics for committee consideration in 2013

January 2013 Attendees (*listed alphabetically*): Laura Bealey, Gil Bessard, Steve Brink, Heather Deutschlaender, John Fisher, Mike Harper, Becky Johnson, Peg Killen, David Meyers, Chris McVey, Kim Peck, Julie Peterschick, Rachel Praught, Roland Root, David Sherwood-Gabrielson, Lori Sterner, Sara Sundeen, Leslie Swartling, Jan Thompson, Dee Torgerson and Jeri Werner Not in attendance: Becky Bazarre Guests: Abbie Wells-Herzog and Anne Paulson Facilitator: Holly Johnson

Agenda Topics:

- 1. Welcome / Overview
- 2. Charting Our Course
 - Review and updating of 2012 VRS CRP Advisory Committee charter for 2013
- 3. Vocational Rehabilitation Community Topics
- 4. Strategic Dialogue: Introduction to the DISCOVERY Process
- 5. 2013 CRP Advisory Topics and Calendar
- 6. Wrap Up/Adjourn

Meeting Highlights:

- The committee welcomed four new members who began their three year terms.
- VRS Autism Specialist Abbie Wells-Herzog provided an overview of the DISCOVERY
 Process which is focused on complex consumer situations. The vocational rehabilitation
 community is experiencing a rapid and high level of interest in the model by some
 counties and advocacy groups.
- The committee discussed several potential strategic dialogue topics for 2013.

Next Steps:

- **DOCUMENT SESSION NOTES:** Documentation and communication of session notes for key audiences including committee, VRS organization and CRP partners.
- REVIEW OF 2012 CHARTER FOR 2013 ADOPTION: Committee members will review and email any proposed edits for the 2013 charter to David Sherwood-Gabrielson. The charter will be reviewed for 2013 adoption at the February 22 committee meeting.
- **UPDATE ON THE CSNA REPORT:** Kim Peck will ask Terry Donovan to provide a committee update on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Report at a future meeting.
- **FEBRUARY SUCCESS STORY -** Lori Sterner will provide the VR community success story for the February meeting.
- NEXT MEETING: Friday, February 22nd.

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Welcome and Overview

The committee leaders welcomed four new members to the 2013 VRS CRP Advisory Committee as follows:

- Northern MN representative Julie Peterschick, Productive Alternatives Inc.
- Southern MN representative Rachel Praught, Functional Industries, Inc.
- Metro MN representative Heather Deutschlaender, Pro Act, Inc.
- Metro MN representative Dan Meyers, Opportunity Partners

The new cohort has been selected for the membership term of 2013-2015. With 12 CRP representatives on the committee, there are three cohorts of four representatives each. Each cohort serves a three year term in a staggered progression in order to balance new membership with committee continuity over time.

Charting Our Course

Committee Co-Leader David Sherwood-Gabrielson reviewed the components of the 2012 VRS CRP Advisory Committee charter as groundwork for the annual review and 2013 update process. The charter provides a concise description of the committee's purpose along with key elements including membership, scope, team process guidelines, roles, communication plan and external dependencies. Each year the committee is asked to review their charter and make any relevant updates and edits prior to signifying their commitment for the year through signatures to the approved charter.

VRS Public Affairs Director John Fisher discussed the potential communication support for the CRP Advisory Committee's work in the form of the new VRS Community Outreach Team. The new team is a direct result of an idea generated at the January 2012 CRP Advisory Committee meeting where members discussed the need for a more focused effort on communication, marketing and branding - 'telling our story'. Members were asked to nominate communication and marketing staff from their organizations to meet with John to discuss the broad array of vocational rehabilitation community communication needs and opportunities. A small group was convened for a few conversations to determine interest levels and potential scope.

An organized team was then chartered in late summer 2012 and named the VRS Community Outreach Team to encompass a broad range of communication areas. At their November 2012 meeting, the team focused their work on the ROI of vocational rehabilitation programs. John shared a resulting one page ROI piece that was developed for use by VRS with multiple stakeholders including legislative and other funding entities to communicate the value of investment in vocational rehabilitation programs for individuals and communities. An electronic copy of the ROI piece was sent to advisory committee members.

David asked that committee members review the entire charter and provide any suggested edits to him prior to the next meeting. He will bring a draft 2013 charter to the February meeting for detailed review and refinement with a goal of finalizing of the charter content and securing 2013 membership commitment signatures.

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Vocational Rehabilitation Community Topics

Updates included the following:

❖ DEED/VRS updates:

Staff Changes: In December 2012, DEED Commissioner Katy Clark Sieben named Robin Sternberg deputy commissioner of Economic Development for the Department. Commissioner Clark Sieben also announced that a second Deputy Commissioner position was being created for the Workforce Development division. Cynthia Bauerly has been named to that new role within DEED. Bauerly, who grew up in Minnesota, comes from her job as a commissioner of the Federal Election Commission in Washington, D.C. Her resignation from the FEC is effective February 1 and she begins her work with DEED on February 25. VRS will report into Deputy Commissioner Bauerly as part of Workforce Development.

DEED has also hired a new legislative affairs director, Kim Babine, who replaces Lynne Batzli. With the new legislative session ahead, VRS Director Kim Peck said she and her staff are doing their best to support the ramp up of the new deputy and legislative staff to help fully prepare them to represent VRS as an important part of the larger DEED agency.

- State Budget: Governor Dayton released his draft budget on January 22.
- ❖ Federal sequestration of funds: VRS is continuing to prepare for potential impacts that are scheduled to take effect on March 1st with the federal sequestration of funds in 2013. Without congressional resolution, cuts of approximately 7-10% will occur. VRS estimates this would entail a reduction of \$3.1 million in funding.
- ❖ RSA training input update: David Sherwood-Gabrielson provided an overview of the VRS response provided to RSA's 'Request for Information on the Future Direction of Rehabilitation Training Program'. The RFI was reviewed at the December 2012 meeting.

CRP updates:

Sara Sundeen -

- Courage Center has announced their intention to merge with Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute which is owned by Allina Health. The merger will bring together Sister Kenny's acute services with Courage Center's post acute services for a fuller range of care.
- Sara finishes her current employment with Courage Center today. She will be
 joining Minnesota Career Solutions. The new position is 3 days a week and
 provides Sara an opportunity to reconnect to client work more directly as well as
 spend more time with her children. She will provide her updated contact
 information for the advisory membership roster.

Mike Harper -

 Rise Executive Director John Barrett retired on January 7. Don Lavin retired on January 11. Lynn Noren, who started at Rise as a college intern more than 30 years ago, assumed the role as president, effective January 1.

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 Rise is excited to announce the launch of a grant funded one year effort focused on helping 30 ex-offenders secure employment. Mike is already working with the local St. Cloud VRS RAM to coordinate services.

Lori Sterner -

 Goodwill is excited about a new grant, also serving the St Cloud area, that is focused on working with veterans. She offered to connect with Rise on any potential beneficial intersections between the veteran and ex-offender efforts.

Steve Brink -

Steve shared an exciting development on the community partnership front. Tran\$Em initiated a meeting of providers with Clay County staff to talk about improving services and increasing county funding for more ongoing supports. Four partners were there to collaborate and help the county better understand the services and benefits of the vocational rehabilitation services. Benefits already experienced include reductions in hospitalization costs for the county. Steve reported the meeting was very productive and opened the conversation on increased ongoing supports from the county.

Jeri Werner -

 Triggered by Steve's update on progress with Clay County, Jeri shared that their office is holding meetings with St Louis County to promote a better understanding of each other's services.

Strategic Dialogue: Introduction to the DISCOVERY Process

The purpose of the strategic dialogue was to explore the emerging interest and potential applications and benefits of the DISCOVERY assessment and placement process in Minnesota. The vocational rehabilitation community is experiencing high level of interest in the DISCOVERY model by some counties and advocacy groups notably those representing persons on the autism spectrum. Dakota County has requested that providers serving county residents with disabilities make the DISCOVERY process available to consumers. DISCOVERY is also gaining traction in other states including Ohio, Florida and Texas.

The initial advisory dialogue focused on sharing introductory information and exploring how to proceed. To assist in the introduction, David Sherwood-Gabrielson invited VRS Autism Specialist Abbie Wells-Herzog to provide an overview of how VRS is approaching the model. In addition, VRS Community Partnerships Specialist Anne Paulson was also available to address questions about how VRS is incorporating DISCOVERY services into professional and technical contracts.

DISCOVERY is based on the Griffin-Hammis Discovering Personal Genius process. VRS has modified the model to fit within the VRS service delivery structure. A number of CRPs are exploring and/or beginning to use the model. DISCOVERY arises out of a personcentered planning approach applied to the vocational process through exploring and creating relationships around the individual and his/her unique interests and abilities. DISCOVERY may be an especially promising approach for individuals on the autism spectrum and for consumers with significant cognitive and developmental disabilities who may not benefit from traditional assessment and placement efforts. VRS sees DISCOVERY as an additional option in the agency's 'tool kit' in working with individuals with significant disabilities seeking competitive employment.

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The following information is excerpted from a one page handout entitled 'DISCOVERY Assessment and Placement in VRS' developed and distributed at the meeting by Abbie Wells-Herzog:

DISCOVERY ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT IN VRS

Based on the Griffin-Hammis, Discovering Personal Genius process, VRS has modified the model to fit into Minnesota VRS structure.

Discovery Assessment is a five stage assessment process that seeks to answer: Who is this person?

What are their ideal conditions of employment?

- VRS counselors may recommend Discovery Assessment and Placement when:
 - 1. A consumer has little personal insight and life experience.
 - 2. When traditional placement has not worked out for the person.
 - 3. When the job seeker is not a good candidate for traditional evaluations due to disability issues.
- The process frequently starts at home and looks at transportation, natural supports, interests, skills verification, ideal conditions of employment, and expands to places where interests can be explored through informational interviews and job tryouts.
- The outcome is a revealing of skills and multiple employment directions, which are used to create employment. These are referred to as the job-seeker's "themes".
- Exploration is recorded on a document called the staging record. VRS will soon have an online staging record available.
- Discovery Assessment may take anywhere from 20-40 hours.

Discovery Placement utilizes a Customized Employment approach, utilizing the information assembled from the Discovery Assessment.

- Discovery Placement seeks employment situations that meet the individual's needs and melds it with the needs of the employer.
- Discovery Placement involves assisting the job-seeker to connect with employers where their themes make sense.
- Discovery Placement does not involve filling out online applications, or the traditional interview process.
- Discovery Placement is authorized as a PBA.

(End of handout)

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DISCOVERY – factors to consider as we explore and learn about the model:

- To gain a better understanding of and to conduct research on outcomes to identify who benefits from the model and the levels of benefit that can be achieved through DISCOVERY
 - a. There does not appear to be much evidence based outcome research available on DISCOVERY. An inquiry has been made to Griffin-Hammis for available evidence based outcomes information.
 - b. Early experience indicates there may be some retention issues.
 - c. There are a number of questions on how natural supports and paid supports fit into this approach.
 - d. VRS is working on a process for collecting and evaluating data in Minnesota to see the model may fit in the agency's service options. VRS Specialist for Program Evaluation, Steve Scholl, will develop evaluation criteria to help assess the value the DISCOVERY process for VR consumers and staff.
- 2. To develop consistency in what we mean by 'DISCOVERY' services in language, practice and service levels
 - a. VRS is providing training for VRS staff to develop a common understanding of DISCOVERY including the approach to assessment, the process / expectations for the stages in the model, and the role of customized employment in placement.
 - b. A three-day training on DISCOVERY is available for practitioners.
 - c. Minnesota Technical Assistance and Training (MNTAT) is providing training for the next six months; including a training opportunity in February.
- 3. To educate staff on a 'different' way of providing assessment / placement and how DISCOVERY 'fits' into the VRS system for purchasing services.
 - a. Anne Paulson said VRS is currently working on the best way to tie service payments with the DISCOVERY stages.
 - b. Currently, when assessment aspects of the DISCOVERY have been completed, the next step would be to move to a PBA for customized employment or to conduct additional training if appropriate. VRS may suspend a PBA if new training needs are determined.
 - c. VRS is working to find ways to honor the structural integrity of the model and to match it with payment mechanisms and the contract process.

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CRP perspectives on DISCOVERY include:

- We see the potential to serve our transition age youth and schools with DISCOVERY but we are struggling with the co-funding mix with schools.
- ii. Dakota County is really pushing DISCOVERY as an alternative for people as the county seeks to move more people out of Day Training and Habilitation (DT&H) programs. The County is creating annual service agreements with providers based on hourly fee for DISCOVERY services. CRPs are trying to provide the services counties are requesting. The model is staff intensive and often requires smaller case loads and longer time periods for placement. Identifying staff who are interested in trying the model is a consideration. Staff doing a mix of traditional and DISCOVERY case approaches may be problematic, depending on the skills and interests of the staff person.
- iii. DISCOVERY is focused on 'job development' activities. We think it may work well for people with literacy issues and for people who chronically lose jobs.
- iv. DISCOVERY is not 'super new' more of a re-labeling for what we've been doing for years in many cases. While we think DISCOVERY may have value for some consumers, it may not work well with individuals with an urgent need for immediate employment because the time that may be involved in the process.
- v. DISCOVERY may be a more refined approach that helps those who struggle with a lack of job history or insight.

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Moving Forward with DISCOVERY

Kim Peck asked the CRP Advisory Committee for their help in developing a systems level approach and infrastructure to support understanding and application of the DISCOVERY model/process in Minnesota. Key components will include developing outcomes standards and developing a plan for tracking and evaluation of DISCOVERY services. Kim asked for the committee's help in determining how DISCOVERY could best fit into the current structure and how can we approach our work from a more agile frame of reference.

As a model, we want to understand the similarities and differences in DISCOVERY in comparison to other service models such as Individualized Placements and Supports (IPS). Having greater clarity about the applicability distinct service models will be essential for helping counselors understand and apply DISCOVERY appropriately. We anticipate that transition age youth and individuals on the Autism Spectrum may benefit from DISCOVERY and we recognize there is a strong interest in this model from both of these groups.

The committee voiced interest in participating in a four hour training on the basics of DISCOVERY at a future meeting. Members suggested that a potential combined regional training might be developed for VRS and CRP/LUV staff to create a shared baseline understanding using an approach similar to what was done for Placement 101. Members noted the value of creating a shared understanding of both CRP/LUV and VRS 'worlds' to help find the important intersections for better outcomes.

Abbie Wells-Herzog and Anne Paulson will continue to work on integrating the DISCOVERY model into the Minnesota VRS service structure. Advisory members who volunteered to assist Abbie and Anne in that process are Heather Deutschlaender, Peg Killen, Becky Johnson, Dan Meyers, and Lori Sterner.

2013 CRP Advisory Topics

The CRP Advisory Committee reviewed and affirmed the draft 2013 strategic dialogue priority topics developed at the December 2012 meeting as follows:

- a. Continuing to be involved in efforts to enhance and support Placement Services capacity and outcomes, such as Next Gen Placement and Placement 101 & 201
- b. Supported Employment Plans... education and understanding, training
- c. CRP Utilization Reports... updates and refinements
- d. Revisiting Informed Choice
- e. Implications of emerging populations and challenges
- f. VRS, CRPs and CILs our relationship and working together in the future
- g. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)

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KEY MESSAGES FROM TODAY

↓ Important Messages for the Greater Vocational Rehabilitation Community:

- On our first meeting of the year, we are excited to welcome four new members into the advisory's strategic and collaborative efforts on behalf of the greater vocational rehabilitation community in Minnesota.
- While uncertainties such as the looming threat of the federal sequestration of funds may challenge us, the certainty of our purpose and calling fortify our resilience in our work.
- With its rapid emergence, the DISCOVERY model offers possibilities for serving people who would benefit from this approach to assessment and placement. Families are hearing about DISCOVERY and requesting these services. As partners in Minnesota's vocational rehabilitation community, we are committed to learning more about DISCOVERY as a vocational model to see how it might be effectively added to our existing service offerings.
- We believe there is a wide range of understanding and application of the new model/process. DISCOVERY is not necessarily linear nor assembly line in its approach. As a community, we need to address important questions such as: how can we better ensure integrity for this new model (the 'fidelity standards' for IPS as example) and how do we fund the model.
- The list is long when it comes to all the strategic priorities we would like to work on as an advisory committee. We will continue to balance the ongoing strategic topics with those important topics that emerge along the way.